

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Preface	9
Prologue. <i>A New Beginning</i>	11
Chapter 1. <i>“Suns Seem Larger at Their Setting”</i>	15
Chapter 2. <i>Lee’s First Major Act as President</i>	27
Chapter 3. <i>“Our Chieftain is no More!”</i>	33
Chapter 4. <i>Memorial to Lee</i>	49
Chapter 5. <i>Lee’s Faithful Companion.</i>	61
Chapter 6. <i>Saving the “Shrine of the South”</i>	75
Chapter 7. <i>A National Treasure</i>	89
Bibliography.	121
Index	125



PROLOGUE



A NEW BEGINNING

11

*O*n Palm Sunday morning, April 9, 1865, Robert E. Lee commanded an army that had exhausted its options to continue fighting. He sent his aide, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Venable, to consult with Major-General John Gordon and assess Gordon's ability to break through the enemy's position. Venable returned with a message from Gordon: "I have fought my corps to a frazzle, and I fear I can do nothing unless I am heavily supported by Longstreet's corps."

Longstreet's corps, however, was overwhelmed with the task of protecting the Confederates' rear position from a much larger federal force. Lee, speaking to no one in particular,

but in the presence of Venable and other officers, said, "Then there is nothing left me but to go and see General Grant, and I would rather die a thousand deaths."

Brigadier-General E. Porter Alexander urged Lee to consider breaking up his army into small groups to move through Union lines, using the guerilla tactics Confederate President Jefferson Davis had suggested earlier in the month. After the fall of Richmond a few days earlier, Davis had said, "We have now entered upon a new phase of the struggle. Relieved from the necessity of guarding particular points, our army will be free to move from point to point, to strike the enemy ..."